

Despite the fact that the species is rare or local over much of its continental range, and at the present day divisible into a number of apparently discontinuously distributed populations, geographical variation is not very apparent, if indeed it really exists at all. Lack of adequate series prevents any final conclusions being reached at this stage.

J. G. Williams (*in litt.*) mentions that he has never collected it personally in East Africa. At the present day it is unknown from anywhere near the type locality and is unrepresented in the collection of the Durban Museum (Clancey *in litt.*), and has been visually recorded no nearer than ninety to a hundred miles north of the type locality (Lawson, personal communication). Recent developments and ecological changes associated with replacement of the natural habitat by sugar cane, may have caused a local retraction of the specific range, as the type locality appears to be at the extreme southern limit of the species distribution. The supposed record by Levaillant from near the Zwart River in the Eastern Cape Province is founded on a bird from the Far East and represents another species (Neumann, 1902).

On the evidence assembled above, it becomes clear that it will be henceforth necessary to place *C. t. wahlbergi* C. Grant in the synonymy of *C. t. grillii* Hartlaub, so that all the birds south of the Zambesi River must in future be known by the older name, leaving the only other continental African race, *C. t. caeruleiceps*, whose status too, as a satisfactorily recognisable form must remain in considerable doubt, and seemingly restricted to the highlands of Kenya Colony northward to Abyssinia and westward to the Sudan and Uganda.

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The relative priority of the generic names *Uraeginthus* and *Granatina*.

by C. J. O. HARRISON

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In his revision of the Estrildidae, Wolters (1957) combined the two genera *Uraeginthus* and *Granatina* to form a single genus under the latter name, an arrangement subsequently used by others. *Uraeginthus* was described by Cabanis in 1851. For *Granatina* Delacour (1943), Wolters (1957) and Steiner (1960) all cite "Bonaparte, *Conspectus Generum*

Avium, vol. 1, p.458, 1850.'"; but Sharpe (1890) pointed out that Bonaparte never used this name for a genus, and that although it was subsequently treated as a generic name by other authors it had never been described. Bonaparte only used the term "Granatinae" for a species group within his genus *Estrela*. Sharpe (1890) gives a diagnostic description of the genus in his key to the genera (*loc. cit.* p. 203) and the correct citation would appear to be: *Granatina*, Sharpe, *Cat. B. M.* xiii, p. 403, 1890, type by tautonomy *Granatina granatina*.

In these circumstances *Uraeginthus*, Cabanis, 1851, has priority, and if the two genera are to be combined this is the correct generic name.

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An addition to our knowledge of *Euplectes diademata*

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The Fire-fronted Bishop, *Euplectes diademata* Fischer & Reichenow, is an uncommon local species with a restricted distribution in the eastern districts of southern Somalia and Kenya, and in north-eastern Tanganyika. During seventeen years ornithological work in East Africa I have encountered the species only twice, near Kilifi on the Kenya coast and near Isiolo, Northern Frontier Province, Kenya.

Following the exceptionally heavy rains in Kenya during late 1961 numerous Fire-fronted Bishops appeared in the Tsavo Royal National Park (East). The species was previously unknown in the Park. The habitat selected was areas of lush grass with scattered small bushes and herbage. Nesting colonies of eight and twelve nests were discovered on the 18th and 25th January, 1962 by Mr. David Sheldrick, Warden of the Tsavo Royal National Park and his assistant Mr. Charles Moore. One colony was at mile 8 on the Voi-Lugard's Falls road and the other at the base of Irima Hill. Some nests contained young, others fresh or incubated eggs, and some nests were recently constructed and were without eggs. Specimens of the birds, nests and eggs were collected.

Weights of specimens. Five adult males weighed 14, 13.5, 15, 13.5 and 15 grammes: one adult female 13.5 grammes: one juvenile male 14 grammes and one juvenile female 14 grammes.

Food. The stomach contents of all specimens examined consisted entirely of grass seeds—probably *Sporobolus* sp. (det. Miss D. Napper).

Breeding habits. Nests were built between 18 and 30 inches above the ground, attached to grass stems or to twigs of small shrubs growing in clumps of grass. All nests examined, over twenty, had the entrance holes facing due north. Nests were usually very frail structures, oval in shape with a large top side entrance. Only one nest examined was more solidly constructed, being thickly lined with fine grass. The typical nest was woven of grass blades and grass stems with a little softer grass as lining: it measured $4\frac{1}{2} \times 3\frac{1}{2}$ inches with a broad top-side entrance $2 \times 1\frac{1}{2}$ inches.